***The Art and Aspirations of a Commenter***

I believe in the power of a free exchange of ideas. I also recognize that words or access to some information can be of harm to others, intentionally or unintentionally. As a commenter, I therefore aspire to participate responsibly in the great online conversation by:

* treating all bloggers with respect.
* seeking first to understand what is being said.
* celebrating another's accomplishments.
* using school appropriate language.
* rephrasing ideas in the blog that made me think, made me feel, or helped me learn to let the blogger know his/her voice has been heard.
* commenting specifically and positively, without criticism. If I disagree, I will comment appropriately, politely stating my perspective.
* being mindful always that I may be a role model to my audience, especially if they are younger than I.
* making no reference to, link to, and/or giving access to any information that may be inappropriate for a school setting.
* asking at least one question in my comment with the hopes of continuing a conversation and deepening thinking.
* using a triple check before submitting any comment: Would I be happy to have my mother read this comment? My grandmother? My favorite teacher?

From: http://newballetcommenting.blogspot.com/2006/03/art-and-aspirations-of-commenter.html

Asking good questions is so important in our classrooms. We use them to guide our discussions and push ourselves to a higher level of thinking. So the questioning and the discussion part is crucial when blogging. Commenting on blogs has the potential to really push those learning connections, but it is also how we keep the conversation going.

Here are some suggestions for comment starters.......

* This made me think about.......
* I wonder why.......
* Your writing made me form an opinion about.......
* This post is relevant because.......
* Your writing made me think that we should.......
* I wish I understood why.......
* This is important because.......
* Another thing to consider is.......
* I can relate to this.......
* This makes me think of.......
* I discovered.......
* I don't understand.......
* I was reminded that.......
* I found myself wondering.......

If you are interested in keeping the conversation going (as your teacher is!), be sure to finish your comment with a question to the blog’s author!